

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 05411 190037Z

63/53

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-10 OMB-01

/069 W

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O R 181457Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8001

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5411

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 1)

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG,US

SUBJECT: KNESSET DEBATE ON INTERIM AGREEMENT

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

SUMMARY: SHORT STORMY KENSSET DEBATE AUGUST 18  
HIGHLIGHTED SHARP AND FUNDAMENTAL POLARIZATION  
BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION ON INTERIM  
EGYPTIAN/ISRAELI AGREEMENT. RABIN GAVE STRONG  
REAFFIRMATN TO GOI COMMITMENT TO STEP-BY-STEP  
APPROACH TO PEACE AS EXPRESSED IN CURRENT NEGOTIATING  
EFFORT ESCHEWED DISCUSINGDETAILS AND WELCOMED  
PRESIDENTIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF SECRETARY'S RETURN  
TO MIDDLE EAST. OPPOSITION LEADER BEGIN, ON  
OTHE HAND, CLAIEMD THAT GOI BY ABANDONING DEMAND  
FOR NON-BELLIGERENCY COMMITMENT AND BACKING DOWN  
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 05411 190037Z

ON TERRITORIAL ISSUES HAD SURRENDERED BY STAES TO

EGYPTAIN DEMANDS. HE SAID GOI WAS ABOUT TO CONCLUDE AGREEMENT ENDANGERING ISRAELI SECURITY AND IN PROCESS CREATE PRECEDEN ENCOURAGING PRESSURES FOR FURTHER WITHDRAWALS. DEBATE ENDED WITH APPROVAL FOR GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL TO CONDUCT SUBSTANTIVE DEBATE ON INTERIM AGREEMENT AT UNSPECIFIED FUTURE DATE-- PRESUMABLY UPON PRESENTATION OF AGREEMENT TO KNESSET FOR RATIFICATION. END SUMMARY.

1. LIKUD LEADER MENAHEM BEGIN OPENED DEBATE, CHARGING THAT GOI HAD GIVEN UP ITS COMMITMENT TO RETAIN PASSES AND OIL FIELDS IN ABSENCE OF EGYPTAIN NON-BELLIGERENCY COMMITMENT. HE CHARACTERIZED NEGOTIATIONS AS " SURRENDER BY STAGES.", CLAIMING THAT INTERIM AGREEMENT WOULD NOT BE STEP TO PEACE BUT RATHER INVITATION TO PRESSURES FOR FURTHER WITHDRAWALS WITHOUT PEACE. AFTER REVIEWING GOI PUBLIC POSITIONS ON INTERIM AGREEMENT SINCE SUSPENSION OF NEGOTIATIONS, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS " FIVE STAGES OF WITHDRAWAL", HE SAID THAT EROSION OF ISRAEL'S POSITION HAD DESTROYED GOI'S CREDIBILITY AS NEGOTIATOR. SURRENDER OF ABU RODEIS FIELDS WOULD LEAVE ISRAEL VULNERABLE TO FUTURE US PRESSURES FOR ADDITIONAL WITHDRAWALS. HE THEN CALLED FOR GOVERNMENT'S RESIGNATION ON GROUNDS THAT IT HAD NO MANDATE TO WITHDRAW FROM OILFIELDS AND PASSES WHILE STATE OF WAR WITH EGYPT PERSISTED. DECISION ON INTERIM AGREEMENT SHOULD BE PUT TO ISRAELI PUBLIC, EITHER IN PLEBISCITE OR ELECTION.

2. IN REPLY PRIME MINISTER RABIN SAID GOI DETERMINATION TO WORK TOWARD PEACE IS BASED ON MANDATE FROM ELECTORATE AND DENOUNCED AS IRRESPONSIBLE ATTEMPTS TO PRESENT GOI POSITION AS DAMAGING TO ISRAELI SECURITY. (FBIS IS CARRYING FULL TEXT.) RABIN ANSWERED FORMAL CALL FOR DEBATE ON NEGOTIATIONS BY CLAIMING THAT STAGE HAS NOT YET BEEN REACHED AT WHICH GOI CAN PRESENT ITS DECISION TOGETHER WITH COMPLETE DATA ON WHICH IT IS BASED, BUT REITERATED HIS PROMISE TO TAKE INITIATIVE TO HOLD FULL SCALE FOREIGN POLICY CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 TEL AV 05411 190037Z

DEBATE WHEN THAT STAGE IS REACHED.

3. RABIN REMINDED KNESSET THAT CABINET PREVIOUS DAY HAD EXPRESSED ITSELF FAVORABLY RE TRIP TO REGION BY SECRETARY, BUT CAUTIONED THAT IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL IF SHUTTLE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. PM ADDED THAT " THE ATTEMPT THAT HAS BEEN MADE BY VARIOUS ELEMENTS TO PRESENT DR. KISSINGER AS PERSONA NON GRATA, AND HIS

VISIT AS A DICTATE FORCED ON ISRAEL, HAS NO BASIS IN ISRAEL'S POLITICAL LIFE AND EXPERIENCED." HE POINTED OUT THAT IT IS LIABLE TO DISTURB THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE US.

4. RABIN REFERRED TO POSITIVE ROLE PLAYED BY US IN MIDDLE EAST SINCE SIX-DAY WAR AND PRAISED US EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ISRAEL. HE TERMED AMERICAN ASSISTANCE IN FOSTERING ISRAEL'S OWN STRENGTH AND ITS RESPECT FOR ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY AS " A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE" IN US-ISRAELI RELATIONS.

5. RABIN ANSWERED OPPOSITION CHARGES THAT INTERIM AGREEMENT BEING CONTEMPLATED WOULD IMPAIR ISRAELI SECURITY BY EMPHASIZING THAT ISRAELI SITUATION AT PRESENT IS BETTER THAN IN MARCH AND THAT GOI WILL SIGN AN INTERIM SETTLEMENT ONLY WHEN CONVINCED THAT IT WILL BENEFIT ISRAELI SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE BROADEST SENSE. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE OPPOSITION REJECTS AN INTERIM SETTLEMENT AND THEREFORE DOES NOT HAVE TO CONCERN ITSELF WITH SABOTAGING THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS, WHICH IT RISKS BY ITS " IRRESPONSIBLE AND UNFOUNDED" ATTEMPT TO PRESENT GOI POSITION AS DAMAGING TO ISRAELI SECURITY.

6. OPPOSITION MKS HECKLED AND INTERRUPTED RABIN REPEATEDLY, CLAIMING THAT HIS PREPARED TEXT WAS EVASIVE AND FAILED TO RESPOND TO THEIR CHARGES... OVER AND ABOVE BASIC DISAGREEMENT ON SUBSTANCE OF NEGOTIATING ISSUES, LIKUD BEHAVIOR--WHICH VETERAN PARLIAMENTARY OBSERVERS REGARDED AS EXTREME--WAS REFLECTION OF ITS FRUSTRATION THAT GOI WOULD ENGAGE IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 TEL AV 05411 190037Z

SUBSTANTIVE DEBATE ONLY AFTER AGREEMENT HAD BEEN CONCLUDED. IN FACT, DEBATE CONCLUDED WITH VOTE AUTHORIZING SUCH DEBATE UPON GOVERNMENT'S INITIATIVE AND AT UNSPECIFIED DATE. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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7. COMMENT: IN DISCUSSION WITH EMBOFF, PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS ADVISER SAID THAT STORMY DEBATE PRESAGED " UNPLEASANT" WELCOME WHICH SOME ELEMENTS OF ISRAELI PUBLIC AND OPPOSITION LIKUD WOULD EXTEND TO SECRETARY. SEVERAL MKS ALSO COMMENTED THAT ISRAELI PUBLIC, INFLUENCED BY LIKUD CAMPAIGN AND UNINFORMED ABOUT SUBSTANCE OF NEGOTIATIONS , WAS DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS ABOUT WHAT IT BELIEVED WAS US-IMPOSED

SETTLEMENT. AT SAME TIME, CONSENSUS OF MKS WITH WHOM  
WE SPOKE WAS THAT AGREEMENT WOULD PASS KNESSET  
BY SMALL-TO-COMFORTABLE MARGIN ALONG LINES  
OUTLINED IN TEL AVIV 4379.  
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## Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** KNESSET DEBATE ON INTERIM AGREEMENT BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED  
**TAGS:** PFOR, IS, EG, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006